



Plan for AFATDS NET

For a unit, the advanced Field Artillery tactical data system (AFATDS) training is a journey. The unit's success is directly related to command emphasis and the amount of effort leaders and soldiers invest in the three phases of the journey.

Phase I: Pre-NET. This phase begins with the new material information briefing (NMIB) and ends when the new equipment training team (NETT) arrives to begin training. The NMIB is a cooperative briefing involving the TRADOC System Manager (TSM) for AFATDS out of Fort Sill, Oklahoma; the AFATDS Program Manager (PM) and Communications

and Electronics Command (CECOM) NETT out of Fort Monmouth, New Jersey; and most importantly, the unit. It finalizes the details for equipment issue and determines the locations and schedule for the NET. Once the NMIB is complete, the process of preparing for NET begins and involves not only the entire FA battalion, but also the division staff. (See the figure.)

Phase II: NET. NET is four weeks of instructor-led training for leaders, maintenance personnel and operators with a one-week communications exercise (COMEX). In September 2000, AFATDS NET will grow to seven weeks to allow time to cover technical fire support functions added to the software.

Leader and maintenance training runs through the first week of NET. The leader course is designed for key leaders who make tactical decisions using AFATDS but don't supervise day-to-day AFATDS operations—such as, S2s, S3s, fire support officers (FSOs) and fire support coordinators (FSCOORDS). The maintenance course is for soldiers maintaining the AFATDS computers and power generation and distribution equipment—31U, 35J and 52Ds.

The operator's course starts the second week and lasts three weeks. It's designed for AFATDS supervisors, senior AFATDS operators and AFATDS operators. The course is to train-the-trainers, not just serve as an operator's course. If possible, units should pair supervisors and senior operators at workstations during training. This facilitates teamwork and helps soldiers tap the experience of the NET trainers to work through issues that pertain to their respective levels.

The final week of NET is the COMEX. All those who will supervise, operate and maintain AFATDS *must* participate in the COMEX. Non-AFATDS devices—battery computer system (BCS), Kiowa Warrior, initial fire support automated system (IFSAS), all-source analysis system (ASAS), maneuver control system (MCS—participate in the COMEX. The NETT and Field Integration Team (FIT) out of Fort Hood, Texas, teach the unit how to interoperate with these systems and what the limitations are. During the COMEX, the unit takes charge of the equipment and its operation—the NETT departs in five days.

Phase III: Post-NET. This phase begins immediately after NET with the implementation of the unit sustainment training plan developed during Phase I. Units build on their NET experience to achieve the training levels necessary for sustained digital fire support operations.

Units can conduct sustainment training using their trainers qualified in NET and by tapping several resources: distance learning alternatives; requesting an FA School mobile training team (MTT); using the Fort Sill Website and Email to exchange information with other AFATDS units to remain current on software changes and tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs); and using the AFATDS liaison network developed in the previous phases. Fielded units also get "one free" NET support team for a major exercise.

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S1

- Identify inbound leaders/soldiers with the AFATDS skill qualification identifier (SQI).
- Stabilize key NCOs and officers and ensure the unit doesn't lose them at the same time after they are trained.

S3/Fire Control Element/Fire Direction Center

- Develop an AFATDS standing operating procedure (SOP) to include data distribution, master unit list (MUL) and command and supported unit relationships. (Get a copy from an AFATDS-equipped unit or use the 66-3 on the Fort Sill Website.)
- Schedule key leaders for the AFATDS operator's course at Fort Sill.
- Develop a schedule that ruthlessly fences-off the weeks/personnel for NET.
- Establish liaisons with the Communications and Electronic Command (CECOM) NETT at Fort Monmouth; the Command, Control and Communications Division (CCCD) of the Fire Support and Combined Arms Operations Department (FSCAOD) at the FA School, Fort Sill; and the Field Integration Team (FIT) at Fort Hood.
- Prepare an AFATDS sustainment training plan to implement after fielding.

S4/Property Book Officer/Battalion Maintenance Officer and Team

- Develop a plan to pick-up issued equipment on the unit property books.
- Determine unit status reporting (USR) procedures.
- Determine whether AFATDS computers should be floats or spares, where they should be maintained and the procedures for exchange.
- Integrate AFATDS computers into the Army maintenance management system (TAMMS) and prescribed load list (PLL) database.
- Determine the necessity of command-directed PLL items (SCSI terminators, cables, etc.). FIT and TSM-AFATDS can help with this.

Staff Tasks to Prepare for AFATDS NET